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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)

Contents

Agenda item 28: Advancement of women (*continued*)

(a) Advancement of women (*continued*)

(b) Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (*continued*)

Agenda item 64: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

(b) Implementation of the outcome of the special session on children (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 28: Advancement of women (*continued*) (A/65/336)

(a) Advancement of women (*continued*) (A/65/38, A/65/208, A/65/209, A/65/218, A/65/268, A/65/334 and A/65/354-S/2010/466)

(b) Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/65/204)

1. **Mr. Kegopilwe** (Botswana), recalling that his country's efforts for the empowerment of women continued to be inspired by the principles laid down in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, and the Millennium Development Goals, said that since it had acceded to the Convention in 1996, Botswana had been working to achieve gender equality by reforming its domestic legislation and adopting such instruments as the National Gender Programme Framework and its related advocacy and social mobilization strategy, which guided its endeavours in that regard.

2. Despite their important role in all spheres of social life, women suffered disproportionately from the consequences of economic, financial, food and energy crises and the effects of climate change, which hindered their participation in public life and, more generally, their development. In that regard, developing countries especially were in need of the international community's help to acquire the means of coping with the effects of the crisis and of catering for women's needs.

3. Botswana had improved the status of women, particularly in the areas of access to education and care. It promoted the recruitment of women to positions traditionally reserved for men, including military, government and parastatal organizations. However, there were still challenges, particularly regarding maternal and infant care, control of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and the problem of violence against women.

4. Hence, the Botswana delegation saw the creation of UN-Women as a turning point in the advancement of women's rights.

5. **Ms. Tiendrébéogo-Kabore** (Burkina Faso) said that in the context of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, her country had in 2009 adopted a National Gender Policy that provided a framework for all actions taken in support of equality between men and women. The policy was supported by a three-year action plan for 2011-2013 that would cost an estimated 5.085 billion CFA francs. Moreover, legislation to ensure better representation of women in politics, also adopted in 2009, marked a further step forward in the promotion of equality between the sexes.

6. In 2008, convinced that education and literacy were a springboard for the empowerment of women, Burkina Faso had set up a programme to combat poverty by enhancing women's skills; it had posted a 92.86 per cent success rate. Training in and awareness of women's rights were another important aspect of Government policy. The National Women's Forum, established in 2008, and the African Women's Decade, launched in 2010, also aimed to highlight women's specific concerns.

7. Out of a desire to fulfil its obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 64/137, Burkina Faso had in December 2009 launched a programme to combat violence against women.

8. Finally, the Burkinabe delegation called on its technical and financial partners to continue to help the Government of Burkina Faso to carry on its work to reduce inequalities between men and women, as that effort was suffering from insufficient resources, to say nothing of sociocultural inertia.

9. **Ms. Ivanović** (Serbia), indicating that her country aligned itself with the European Union's statement on the advancement of women, said that Serbia had established a clear and comprehensive policy and a set of legal provisions and mechanisms at the national and local levels to promote women's rights and gender equality. Serbia had adopted a national strategy for the advancement of women and the promotion of gender equality which was coordinated with the national strategy for poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals. Efforts were being made to ensure capacity-building in the relevant Government ministries and departments. Serbia worked closely with civil society and the international and

regional organizations concerned whenever activities to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment were undertaken. Accordingly, the speaker welcomed the creation of UN-Women, which would be better able to coordinate actions to promote gender equality.

10. Having the firm intention of implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and, thereafter, all Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, Serbia had developed an action plan to that end whose adoption by the Government was pending.

11. **Mr. Ramafole** (Lesotho), endorsing the statements made by the representatives of Yemen, Malawi and Tanzania on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Group of African States, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), respectively, said that a review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action had shown that many challenges remained, such as violence against women and their particular vulnerability to the impacts of the economic and financial crisis, although considerable progress had been made in terms of women's access to education and participation in decision-making. In 2003, Lesotho had established a policy to promote the appointment of women to political office and decision-making posts and had passed a law reserving 30 per cent of local council positions for women.

12. To reduce maternal mortality and address the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on women, Lesotho had established reproductive health programmes focusing on safe motherhood, family planning services and prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

13. In the face of gender-based violence, the Government had adopted the Sexual Offences Act, set up a unit within the police force for the protection of women and children, and created a "One Stop Centre" offering comprehensive support to victims of gender violence.

14. Regarding human trafficking, Lesotho had ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and had joined the consensus on the adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (A/RES/64/293). Finally, Lesotho welcomed the creation of UN-Women.

15. **Ms. Kamara** (Liberia), endorsing the statements made by the representative of Yemen, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of Malawi, on behalf of the Group of African States, said she regretted that, despite the successes recorded, women still took little part in decision-making, outnumbered men among the poor, occupied precarious, ill-paid jobs, and accounted for two thirds of all illiterate adults.

16. Recognizing the importance of gender equality for sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and equitable development, Liberia had established a national gender equality policy; an action plan to combat gender-based violence; and a unit of the Ministry of Justice with special responsibility for sexual offences. It was also developing a new code of ethics for the civil service to erase gender inequalities in the public sector.

17. Liberia had also increased the number of women occupying ministerial and managerial positions; considered gender equality issues in its poverty reduction strategy; implemented a policy on girls' education; and completed the action plan for implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

18. Finally, the Liberian delegation welcomed the creation of UN-Women and was committed to fully supporting the new entity in all its activities, in the realization that the advancement of women was a common objective that required all States to strive relentlessly for the empowerment of women in all spheres of development.

19. **Ms. Klein Solomon** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that women, more and more of whom were emigrating as individuals, were increasingly subject to exploitation and sexual abuse, both as women and as migrants, especially since they mainly worked in informal sectors that offered no protection. She therefore supported the Secretary-General's call for the organization of awareness-raising and educational campaigns to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

20. The problem of human trafficking was primarily a labour market issue, and IOM was firmly convinced that the solution lay in the establishment of mechanisms for safe, regulated migration and the adoption by destination and origin countries of

migration management policies that would protect migrants' rights.

21. Finally, IOM noted that it had the world's largest statistical database on the trafficking of women and girls, whose importance the Secretary-General had stressed in his report on the matter (A/65/209).

22. **Mr. Kalyoncu** (Observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)) said his delegation hoped that one day gender equality would become a universal norm in Muslim and non-Muslim countries alike; hence, he welcomed the creation of UN-Women.

23. According to United Nations statistics, some member States of OIC were among those that had made the greatest progress towards achieving development goals relating to the advancement of women.

24. At its various summits, OIC had urged its members to adopt the necessary measures to organize women's activities at the national and international levels and in all areas; to lend their support to links between associations of Muslim women; and to restructure the Organization to ensure the appointment of women to the secretariat's various departments.

25. The first Ministerial Conference on Women's Role in Development had strengthened coordination between member States and led to the following recommendations: to create an expert group within OIC to formulate strategies for the advancement of women; to hold a ministerial-level conference on women every two years; and to hold special meetings within OIC to discuss issues of concern to women.

26. In response to those recommendations, the second Ministerial Conference on the issue had adopted a plan of action for the advancement of women, known as the Cairo Plan of Action for Women.

27. Lastly, the thirty-seventh session of the Conference of OIC Foreign Ministers had adopted the Organization's statute for the advancement of women in its member States.

28. **Ms. Filip** (Observer for the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)) said that violence against women was a true pandemic. For that reason, IPU had, in 2008, launched a campaign to support parliaments in their efforts to end the violence and had joined the Secretary-General's "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" campaign.

29. Parliaments must not be content merely to pass laws, but must also monitor and evaluate their enforcement. They were the better able to play that role in that they had the power to vote appropriations and establish committees and could influence policymakers and public opinion.

30. At the regional level, following the seminars organized by IPU to combat violence against women, Arab parliaments, which had set themselves the priority, in particular, of eradicating violence, proposed an awareness campaign in preparation for the enactment of laws. European parliaments, aware of migrant women's plight and their specific needs, had established a list of seven essential measures, including access to justice for all women victims of violence. The parliaments of Latin America, meanwhile, had established mechanisms to ensure the proper enforcement of laws to counter violence against women.

31. At the national level, IPU provided technical assistance to parliaments considering bills relating to violence against women. IPU, which was conducting those activities in collaboration with the United Nations system, welcomed the creation of UN-Women.

32. **Mr. Young** (Observer for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) welcomed the international community's efforts to promote gender equality and further empower women, in particular through the creation of UN-Women, but stressed that much remained to be done in that regard. He recalled that ICRC had for 10 years been focusing on the special protection international humanitarian law accorded to women and girls, who played a decisive role in the well-being of their community.

33. ICRC had taken a multidimensional approach to the needs of women and girls, who were the first victims of armed conflicts, not only because such conflicts exposed them to physical injury and sexual abuse, but because they could deny them access to health care, drinking water and food, forcing them to flee their homes, leaving behind their families and their main breadwinner.

34. ICRC urged the international community to end all forms of violence against women, particularly sexual violence in times of armed conflict, and to severely punish the perpetrators. Given the urgent need to prevent those crimes, ICRC was providing leadership, in partnership with national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, for various advocacy

endeavours against victim stigmatization and was seeking to expand women's role in the quest for peace by involving them in prevention, protection and recovery programmes.

35. **Ms. Christensen** (Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that women were still suffering from the impact of the world's financial and economic crises, especially since poverty, climate change, food insecurity, migration, displacement, conflict and the violence they continued to face aggravated their vulnerability. Since violence against women was a common feature of emergency situations, the Federation incorporated strategies for violence prevention, mitigation and response into its programming, and had asked a specialist in gender-based violence and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse to see that those issues were addressed in all of its assistance programmes. It also strove to fight against community and family violence, in particular by providing psychological support services.

36. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world were working to change attitudes so that everyone would feel safer. Thus, the Federation had launched two innovative youth programmes and was developing a comprehensive strategy to prevent and combat violence over the next 10 years.

37. However, much had still to be done to protect vulnerable women, and the Federation encouraged women to volunteer, believing that they were best placed to provide humanitarian assistance to their communities, especially to other women, and could most readily acquire the confidence they needed to cope with their daily lives by playing an active role.

38. Finally, the Federation remained committed to working towards the empowerment of women and men and included gender considerations in all its activities.

39. **Ms. Ratsifandrihamanana** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that while the number of people suffering hunger and malnutrition had declined between 2009 and 2010, the improvement still fell far short of the target set at the World Food Summit of 1996. The focus should be on investing in agriculture in developing countries to help produce enough to feed a world population expected to exceed 9 billion by 2050.

40. To be effective, any initiative to solve the problem of food insecurity would have to fight gender inequalities in the agricultural sector and must in particular enhance the decision-making power of women, whose contribution continued to be largely overlooked, so that they could play an increasingly important role in agriculture. The gender inequalities that persisted in many countries, both as regards control of resources and distribution of land ownership, were an obstacle to sustainable development that would benefit everyone.

41. FAO, which in November 2009 had adopted a new strategic framework making gender equity one of its key objectives for the next 10 years, was conducting an internal evaluation of gender mainstreaming in its projects and programmes as well as an audit, undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), to help it build its capacity to promote gender equality. FAO welcomed the creation of UN-Women and the crucial role the new entity would play in coordinating United Nations activities aimed at the empowerment of women.

42. **Ms. Gastaldo** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that gender equality in the workplace was a prerequisite for the reduction of poverty and social inequality and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Thus, in 2009, the International Labour Conference had unanimously adopted a resolution on gender equality at the heart of decent work so as to incorporate gender issues into the four strategic objectives of ILO; and in June 2010 it had first considered the issue of decent work for domestic workers in order to set new international standards in that area, in particular to better protect women and girls, who accounted for a great part of those workers and were particularly vulnerable to discrimination and to physical, verbal and sexual violence.

43. The International Training Centre was also continuing to work towards strengthening national capacities to promote gender equality by providing training courses designed to promote the mainstreaming of gender issues at the national and international levels.

Agenda item 64: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (A/65/336) (*continued*)

(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children (A/65/41, A/65/206, A/65/219, A/65/221 and A/65/262) (*continued*)

(b) Implementation of the outcome of the special session on children (A/65/226) (*continued*)

44. **Mr. Radcliffe** (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), referring to the Secretary-General's report on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/65/206), said that universal ratification of the Convention had almost been achieved; he called, too, for universal ratification of its optional protocols, stressing that their effective implementation would require the adoption of specific penal legislation.

45. **Mr. Grauls** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that while implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols had enabled significant progress to be made in recent years, too many children were still living with HIV, mired in poverty, deprived of access to education, potable water and basic sanitation services, victims of female genital mutilation, or exploited in armed conflicts; in addition, children with disabilities continued to face many challenges. To mark the tenth anniversary of the optional protocols to the Convention, the European Union called for universal ratification and again urged States parties to withdraw all reservations inconsistent with the object and purpose of the Convention; the Millennium Development Goals could be achieved by 2015 only if those instruments were implemented.

46. The European Union called upon States to take effective measures to punish the sexual exploitation of children and to address the needs of its victims; to step up its efforts against all forms of child abuse; and to cooperate more closely to end violence against children in all its forms, including violence in the electronic media, an objective it had made a priority. The European Union recalled, too, that under the Convention, the death penalty could not be imposed on persons under the age of 18.

47. The European Union also remained committed to combating the economic exploitation of children and to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016, and aimed to ensure that children were protected from the serious physical and emotional damage caused by such labour.

48. The European Union also called for an end to the recruitment of child soldiers and to the murder, mutilation and rape of children that occurred during armed conflict. While welcoming the progress made in the fight against those scourges since the appearance of the report by Ms. Graça Machel, it would seek to further advance its activities in that field by bringing the European Union Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict in line with current reality. In that connection, the European Union reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1612 (2005), 1820 (2008) and 1882 (2009) and of the measures called for in the Paris Principles.

49. A commitment to children's rights must be translated into tangible action, necessitating close collaboration between the United Nations system, regional organizations, NGOs, civil society and States. For its part, the European Union had in early September held a conference on the fight against child poverty and would, in collaboration with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), be submitting a resolution on the rights of the child to the General Assembly at its present session. Finally, it would continue to fully support the work of the United Nations Children's Fund, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the special procedures mandate holders, and all other United Nations entities working to advance children's rights.

50. **Mr. Goddard** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the 14 member States of CARICOM, reaffirmed the Community's unwavering commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the document entitled "A world fit for children", as demonstrated by the candidacies of Haiti and Suriname for the next election to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

51. He noted, however, that despite the progress made since the adoption of the Convention, children did not enjoy universally recognized rights or special protection measures; their best interests were not taken into account; they continued to be recruited as soldiers and were victims of abuse, rape, armed conflict or

trafficking. Hence, CARICOM welcomed the adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

52. CARICOM member States had made considerable progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and had even exceeded some of them. Their achievements were impressive in terms of net enrolment rates and of the equality — or even parity — of the sexes in primary education. Primary and secondary education was free and was compulsory up to the age of 16. In terms of health, all member States of CARICOM had achieved universal access to primary care, reduced maternal and infant mortality rates, increased immunization coverage, reduced HIV/AIDS transmission from mother to child, and expanded access to antiretroviral treatment.

53. The decrease in the mortality rate among children under 5 was still too slight for Goal 4 to be achieved by 2015, but progress had been made in the areas of access to drinking water, sanitation and immunization. Moreover, the situation remained very serious among the poorest and most marginalized: according to the World Health Organization, more than 200 million children could barely survive, let alone aspire to reach their full potential (see also A/65/226, para. 3). Another problem was childhood obesity. CARICOM welcomed the adoption of resolution 64/265 on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and looked forward to the convening of a high-level meeting, in September 2011, at which the growing epidemic of child obesity would be discussed.

54. CARICOM also subsidized services in the area of early childhood care and postnatal care for mothers and offered parental or family support through joint initiatives with the private sector and development partners. It was acting to help the most vulnerable and marginalized children, in particular by means of a pilot home-visit initiative in seven countries for those without access to any service, and by teaching parents how best to promote their children's health, hygiene and safety.

55. At the regional level, CARICOM States had in 1997 adopted an action plan on childcare and, since 2008, had been seeking to harmonize standards and legal frameworks as an urgent priority. Several working groups on development, human rights, and children's protection, health and education were working together for that purpose. All CARICOM member States were seeking to broaden children's access to quality services by 2015, in accordance with the internationally agreed goals and through the actions of development partners.

56. Though some progress had been made, the CARICOM States had still to overcome obstacles to the adoption of early childhood policies, implement reforms for children lacking care and protection, and strengthen birth registration systems as well as enforcing legislation prohibiting child labour and the exploitation and trafficking of children. The CARICOM countries were faced with budgetary constraints and were having to repay their debts and deal with economic disruption owing in particular to the global financial crisis and extreme weather patterns (Hurricane Ivan having destroyed 36 per cent of kindergartens and 45 per cent of nursery schools), prolonged drought or earthquakes.

57. The fact remained that, to enable children to actually enjoy their rights, the region's States must strengthen policy frameworks, establish monitoring mechanisms, develop child-focused social protection policies, and create an environment conducive to children's development.

58. **Mr. Errázuriz** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Latin American countries were strongly committed to children's rights and called on those States that had not yet done so to make it a priority to sign and ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols, so that all children could fully enjoy their rights and fundamental freedoms. In that connection, he particularly welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 64/142 (Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children) for children deprived of parental care or who were at risk of being so.

59. The Rio Group, which was once again, with the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the European Union, the main sponsor of the omnibus draft resolution on the rights of the child, hoped that the theme for 2010 would more effectively address the promotion and protection of children's rights in early childhood, a crucial stage in their future development and one that would be decisive in terms of their full integration into society.

60. In the Group's view, the document entitled "A world fit for children" was still relevant eight years

after its adoption because its ultimate goal of full rights for all the world's children had still not been achieved.

61. The Rio Group was deeply concerned about children's vulnerability to trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, kidnapping, organ trafficking, sex tourism, pornography, prostitution and cybercrime, all of which were aggravated by poverty, social inequality, discrimination, emigration, insecurity and organized crime. It reaffirmed its commitment to achieving the objectives of the Rio Declaration and Action Plan to Prevent and Stop the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. Moreover, the Group saw the elimination of violence against children as a prerequisite for children's personal and social development and their subsequent full participation in society. It did however note with concern that violence against children persisted despite all efforts to eliminate it. It was important to ensure that children were protected in certain circumstances, particularly where children were travelling alone, in conflict with the law, facing the death penalty, or caught up in a humanitarian emergency, an economic crisis or an alternative care situation, or where they were victims of trafficking.

62. The Rio Group welcomed the increased focus of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on countering violence against children and recommended the adoption of special measures to defend their rights and strike a blow against impunity for such violence, involving government, the family and society in that endeavour. Finally, emphasizing the importance of cooperation and the strengthening of international standards and instruments, the Rio Group reaffirmed its commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals on children's welfare in order to create a world fit for children.

63. **Mr. Emvula** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that in order to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the initiative "A world fit for children", the SADC countries had established specific programmes for children's health and education as part of their poverty reduction strategies and national development plans. SADC had adopted a series of important measures, such as the Maseru Declaration or the multisectoral strategic action framework to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic that was hitting the region's children hard, and to give children access to free care. The region's countries had made significant progress towards implementing the five-year business plan (2004-2009) to implement the strategic framework. To achieve their objectives in terms of access to affordable, quality education, most had adopted plans based on Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals; many would be reaching gender parity in that regard by 2015.

64. The speaker also noted that the SADC countries' education ministers had set up a forum to share experiences and best practices and that SADC had institutionalized consultations with its partners in civil society and the private sector. Deeply concerned about the impact of armed conflict on children's rights, as well as about the use of small arms and light weapons, which had claimed millions of victims in Africa, including many children, he urged member States to strengthen global control on illegal trade in these weapons.

65. **Ms. Sunderland** (Canada), speaking on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, reiterated her hope that the goal of universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols would soon be achieved, as their implementation was one of the most effective ways to promote and protect the rights of children. Universal protection of children against violence, especially in times of armed conflict, must remain a priority; and States must express their support for the Paris Commitments and Principles. Referring to Security Council resolution 1882 (2009), she considered that the monitoring and reporting mechanism and the action plans developed by the parties to the conflict were particularly effective tools to reduce occurrences of grave violations against children and hoped that the mechanism would in future focus on other types of violations.

66. **Mr. Vigny** (Switzerland) encouraged countries to adopt concrete strategies emphasizing cooperation between national and international partners to end violence against children. Those strategies could be fourfold: prevention, awareness-raising, protection and the fight against violence and abuse. Regarding the plight of children in armed conflict, the Swiss delegation stressed the importance of allocating the necessary resources to enable United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions to go on making child protection a priority of their mandates. Switzerland also stressed the need to combat impunity and to take targeted measures to prosecute the

perpetrators of serious violations, as prescribed by the Security Council in its resolutions, and called upon States to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

67. **Ms. Doraig** (Liechtenstein) said that, given the importance of the early years of life for the child's development to adulthood, implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and respect for children's rights were inextricably linked. Access to quality care and education, however necessary it might be, was still not sufficient; children should also be recognized as active participants in their own development. Liechtenstein had enacted a law to that effect and had appointed an ombudsman to oversee the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a large number of violations of children's rights occurred in times of armed conflict, she welcomed Security Council resolution 1882 (2009), which had expanded the application of the monitoring and reporting mechanism. Liechtenstein regretted, however, that the six grave violations were not all accorded the same importance; such unequal treatment of serious violations of children's rights ran counter to the universality and interdependence of human rights and to international humanitarian law.

68. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) called for universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two optional protocols and the withdrawal of all reservations to those instruments. To promote the rights of the child, the Egyptian Government had launched a number of initiatives, including: the Second Decade for the Protection and Welfare of the Egyptian Child (2000-2010), which had eradicated polio as of February 2006; the girls' education initiative; the national campaign against female genital mutilation; the integration of children's issues into budgeting; and the establishment of a special unit to combat child trafficking, which had set up a rehabilitation centre, opened a telephone hotline and organized awareness-raising activities. Finally, as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Egypt also ensured respect for the rights of children with disabilities.

69. **Mr. Al-Aqeel** (Jordan), welcoming the fact that the Committee's report A/65/206 mentioned Jordan's parenting programmes (para. 31) and its second national plan of action for early childhood development (para. 49), said that Jordan had enacted several laws to promote children's best interests, including a new 2010 law on personal status that raised the age of motherhood to 15; a law against cybercrime and sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes; an amended Penal Code in 2010; the 2009 law on the prohibition of trafficking in persons; and the 2008 law on the protection of children against domestic violence.

70. Moreover, Jordan was now finalizing a bill relating exclusively to children, which dealt with all children's issues. It had also developed a national plan (2004-2013) for childhood, legislated against child labour (2006), set aside special budgetary allocations for children (2009) and, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund, adopted a strategic plan to prevent family violence (2005-2009), not to mention the many children's initiatives launched by Her Majesty Queen Rania, in particular through a partnership between the public and private sectors, the 2008 "My School" initiative, which sought to create a favourable learning environment; 115,000 families and 200 schools had benefited from the initiative.

71. Internationally, by the end of the year Jordan would be presenting its first two reports on the implementation of the provisions of the optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It had held an international conference to promote the establishment of a network for girl children in 2006, an Arab forum on young children in 2009, and in the same year had hosted the Second Arab Conference for the protection of children against domestic violence.

72. Finally, Jordan was committed to protecting the rights of the child, believing that a good education in a safe environment was the best way to raise a generation that would play its role in society and contribute to the country's development.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.